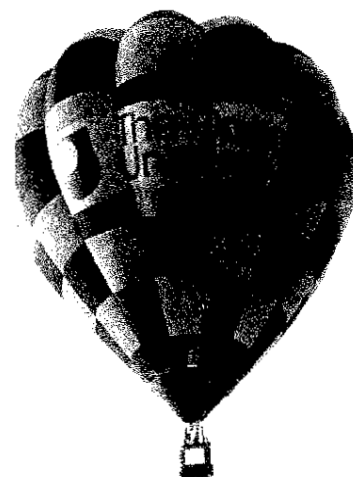


The Ripline



Issue 1 2003/2004

Newsletter of the BRISTOL UNIVERSITY HOT AIR BALLOONING SOCIETY www.bris.ac.uk/depts/union/BUHABS

If you're reading these first few words then you're probably a new or existing member of BUHABS, one of the most active and exciting societies your ever likely to join! This is the first ripline I have ever written so read on and I hope you find it a useful introduction to the society and most importantly enjoyable!

Please keep this edition of the ripline (especially the pull-out section) since it contains some useful information which can be used as a reference for the rest of the year.

It would be great to have any articles from other members to put in the ripline, for example, a flight review, etc. It doesn't have to be long- just e-mail it to me and I'll put it in! Phil



Presidential Welcome:

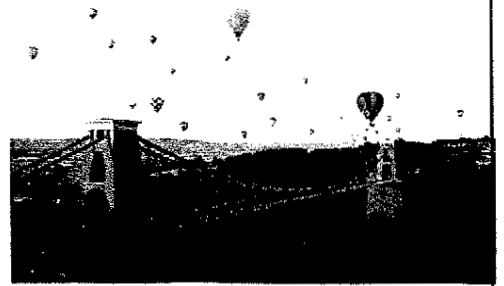


Welcome to BUHABS! Congratulations on making the first step to getting involved in such a brilliant society. Your wallet may feel a bit lighter after handing over your 30 quid but believe me, you won't give it a second thought when you're floating 1000ft over Bristol or Bath on a gloriously sunny, clear morning when the rest of the student world is still wasting their lives in bed! BUHABS is one of only three or four active university hot air ballooning societies in the UK and has now been up and running for over 17 years. We offer an incredible opportunity to fly in hot air balloons at a cost, let's face it, comparable to your average night down the pub. Not only are you going to get this fantastic experience on the cheap, you'll be getting it real! As a member of the society you will learn how to play a real part in getting the balloon up into the air as well as landing in muddy fields and hauling the kit back into our gorgeous new trailer, all under the supervision of our lovely, fully qualified pilots. You will also be taught how to drink a well-earned pint or eat the greasiest cooked breakfasts after a flight. You can get as involved as you like – from just coming out with us once to take pretty pictures of balloons to show your granny, to training to be a balloon pilot yourself. To our old members, welcome back. To our new members, I hope to be meeting you in a pub or on a launch field soon.

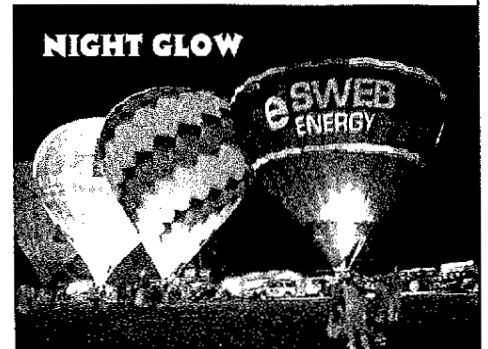
Nicola Hetherington (Your BUHABS President)



BRISTOL INTERNATIONAL BALLOON FIESTA 2003!



This year Ashton court was host to the 25th annual world famous Bristol International Balloon Fiesta from the 7th to 10th August. This popular event now attracts around 120,000 people for each of the four days and generally involves a morning and evening 'mass' balloon launch- consisting of around 100 balloons. These morning and evening slots are separated by a wide variety of events including an exit parachute display, utterly butterfly wing walkers, the sponge plunge and the Kangaroo Kid!! In addition there is the free GWR music concert including some big names such as Louise Redknapp, Busted and Mark Owen. The major attraction is the 'special shapes' launch which produces an awesome display of



weird and wonderful balloons such as the Scots Piper, monster.com (scary!), Bertie Bassett and Budweiser 2 & 3. Another highlight is the 'Night glow' which consists of 25 tethered balloons



lighting their burners in time to music producing a spectacular display followed by the fireworks display. It just so happened that this year's event was right in the middle of our hottest heat wave for years, therefore, rain was not an issue to worry about, however, the wind direction did, on some occasions, head straight for the

airport! However, we did manage to fly with some members getting their first flight and what better way to do it!



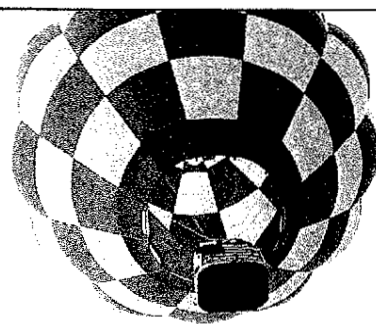
This is definitely a **MUST** if you are around the Bristol area, even if you're not then it's still worth popping down for the weekend since you are likely to have started renting a house by then- just make sure you have all the keys- I drove down from Essex to find I was missing one!

Many thanks to Phil Hooper for providing loads of great photos!

-they look much better in colour so **PLEASE** take time to visit the online version- technology begins with BUIHABS!

Your Guide to..... Flying with BUHABS

UBU



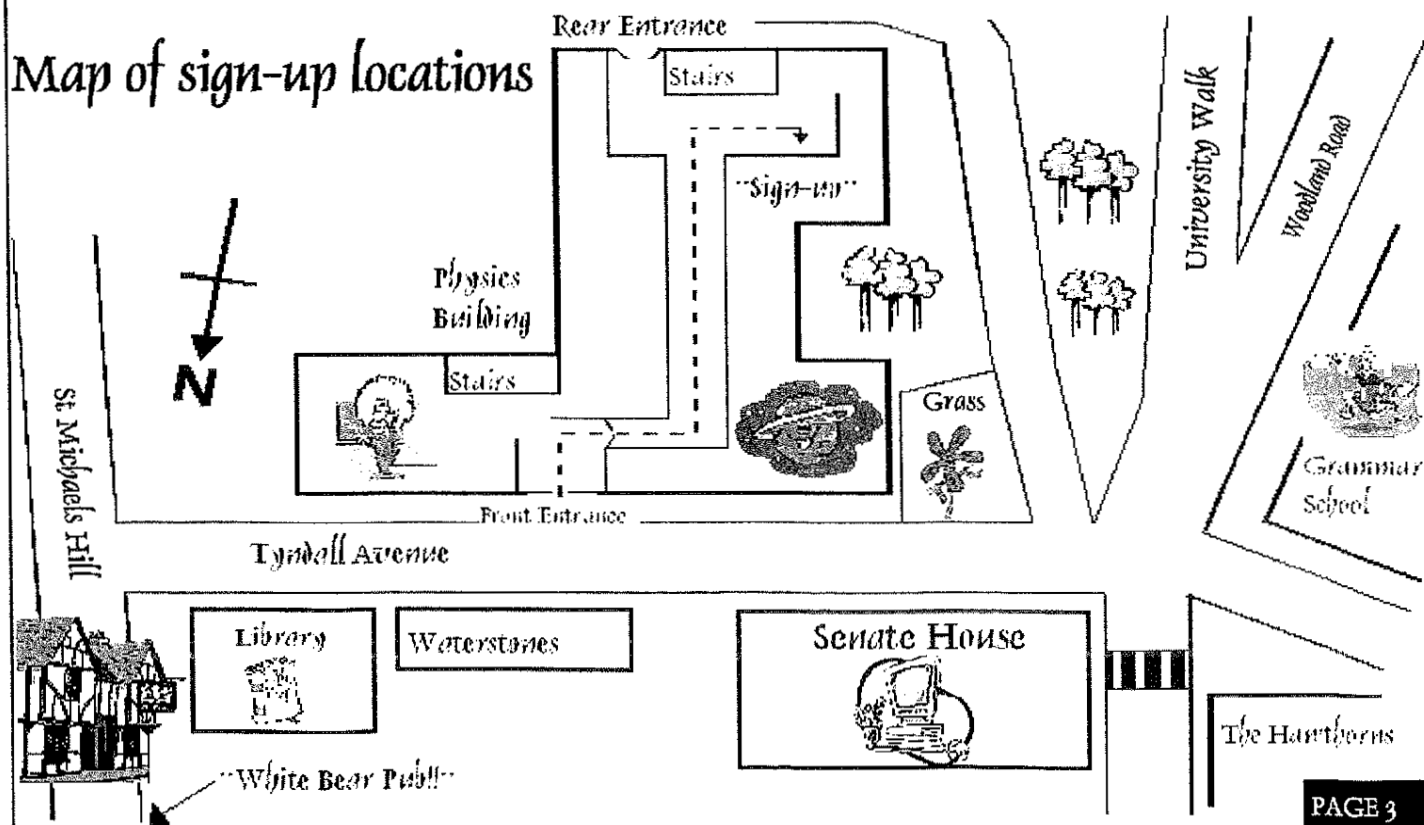
How to sign up for flights, what you will need to bring with you when flying and some frequently asked questions

How to sign up for flights

- Signing up for flights will mainly take place the Thursday before the weekend you want to fly.
- By Thursday morning, an e-mail will have been sent round to inform you as to what slots will be available for the weekend.
- You can come and say Hi to some of us and sign up between 1.10pm and 1.50pm on Thursday in the White Bear Pub (see map). This is the best way to sign up since you can quiz the pilots about the weather and hence get the best slot.
- Alternatively, if you cannot make it, you can phone one of the people in the pub on their mobile, this will be given in the e-mail.
- After 1.50pm, the sign-up list will go up on the Physics building notice board where it will remain until Friday at 1.15pm. During this time you can sign up for any remaining slots.
- If you call us any time other than Thursday lunchtime, we'll put your name down if there are any spaces after it has come down from physics.



Map of sign-up locations



- Assuming the weather for the whole weekend looks promising, flying will be divided into Saturday and Sunday, morning and afternoon slots (4 in total). For each of these slots there will be four spaces of which you may sign up for one. If, on Friday, there are still spaces available for other slots, you may sign up for another space.
- Ballooning requires calm conditions and for this reason we only fly in the morning and evening and therefore the phone-in times will reflect this. Typically, in October they will be approximately 0730 and 1600, getting later and earlier as winter approaches.
- On the sign-up sheet you will find the details of who to phone on the day of the flight and at what time, it is vital that you know this information.
- Signing-up can be a little complicated if you're new to it so the best thing to do is to come and see us in the pub on Thursday lunchtime and we'll sort you out!

Only those that fly pay £14 contribution towards fuel costs, including the pilot. Those crewing do not pay anything unlike other ballooning societies. We make no profits. This is very cheap compared to commercial flights, which would be £160 -£180.

Frequently Asked Questions And Answers!

What if I can't get to the main university area to sign up?



If you study/work away from the main university area of Tyndall Avenue then use the ring us at the pub method. If this is not possible then please talk to Nicola or Ellie and we'll try and find a solution.



What social things does the club do?



We have an active social life in the club. Most of our members are regular clubbers, so can not only advise you on ballooning, but also which clubs in town offer the saddest music! You may even end up joining us on the 'legendary' BUHABS pub/club crawls. All social events are advertised in the ripline.

When do we fly?

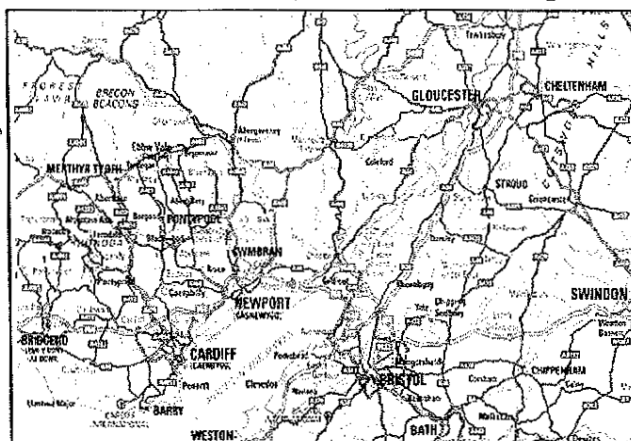
With over 120 members each year, we attempt to fly every slot available. We fly during the morning and evening when the weather is calm. As winter progresses, the phone-in times become later in the morning and earlier in the evening, however, as summer approaches

be prepared to leave Bristol as early as 0500 for morning flights. We will be organising some trips during weekdays this year, this will be advertised via e-mail, however, we cannot guarantee that you will be back in time for early lectures so we leave it to your own discretion if you want to sign up.

Where do BUHABS fly?

We fly mainly in the Bristol/Bath and South Gloucestershire area, however, balloons will of course go exactly where the wind takes them and can even go over to Wales across the Bristol Channel. The van follows the

balloon and arrives wherever the balloon lands to pick everyone up.



Why do I have to phone in whatever the weather?

Even if you think the weather is bad you **MUST** phone in at the time you have signed



up for on the notice board (who

knows, the pilot may have other ideas!). Failure to call will result in loss of two crewing points and is very unfair on other members if a flight has to be cancelled through lack of crew. In the past we have left in the dark and rain to be greeted by the sun at the launch field!

Were you aware that ballooning is the safest form of aviation, and that BUHABS has an excellent safety record? All BUHABS pilots are fully qualified, after rigorous training from some of the country's most experienced pilots. We only fly in good weather conditions and not if conditions are 'marginal'; for this reason you might see other balloonists flying when BUHABS flights are cancelled. Passenger safety is our number one priority.



How many people go out on a trip?

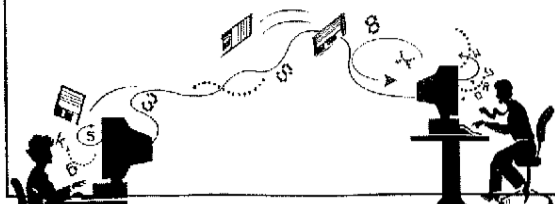
The van carries eight people and the balloon. Of these eight, one is a pilot and the other a driver who must be over 21 years of age, approved and insured on the van. If you are over 21 with a driving licence and would like to be a driver you should get in contact with our Transport Officer, Simon Church. Sometimes we may also have the

PUT (trainee pilot) come along. There are various jobs to be done when launching the balloon, and once you have been out a few times you will have done them all. Two people hold open the mouth of the balloon whilst cold air is blown in, after which the pilot will heat the air with a burner. Another two people are required to pull on the crown line, a rope attached to the top of the balloon, in order to keep the balloon down until it is properly inflated. One person operates the inflation fan and others stand by to put their weight on the basket as the balloon comes upright. You can log your crewing activities in your logbook, and use it towards gaining a British Balloons and Airships Club Crew or Senior Crew qualification.

Every Student has access to e-mail. If you know your e-mail address at the begining of term you will be added to the BUHABS mailing list. Otherwise, to add yourself, send a message saying 'Subscribe BUHABS' to majordomo@bris.ac.uk, a message will be returned to you telling you about the mailing list. Most halls of residence now



have computer access terminals in each individual room connected to the university network. Most new students will need to register with the Computing Service for this facility.



How do I keep in touch with what is happening in BUHABS?

The Ripline! Every month a ripline will be sent to you and will bring you news of upcoming social events, reviews of past flights and hopefully a few laughs! You will also receive e-mails informing you of forthcoming events. Check out our regularly updated website at www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Union/

Unfortunately this will not be possible since we have a commitment to our members to get them flown ASAP. However, during the holidays, with many students away spaces may become available.

What if I want to fly my boyfriend/girlfriend/parent/pet Godzilla?

Please don't pester pilots with such requests until we say it's ok. If you know someone who is keen to fly, they should join BUHABS, never sign up anyone who is not a member, -checks are made.

The Ballooning Checklist!

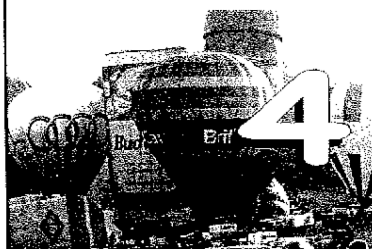
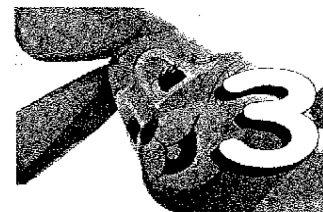


On Thursday lunchtime, visit the White Bear Pub, or call one of the people in the pub, or sign up on the physics notice board after 1.55pm on Thursday. The list is removed at 1.15pm on Friday.



Sign your name in your preferred slot. Only one slot is allowed per person unless there are still slots available on Friday. If you sign up another club member other than yourself you will be penalised if they fail to phone in, so beware! Take note of the EXACT day, time and phone number of the pilot you have to call.

On the day of the flight, give the pilot a bell at the exact time noted. This is vital, even if the weather is appalling since you will lose two crewing points if you fail to call making it less likely that you will fly next



Ballooning is totally weather dependant. Be prepared to be disappointed, you may have to try a few times before you actually get to go out. If the decision is to go, you will need to meet at the Union building at the time stated by the pilot (usually 30-60 mins after the phone-in). Pick ups can be arranged if you live a long way away from the union, for example, the Stoke Bishop halls.

What to bring: £14 in cash or cheque. Buhabs logbook. Suitable clothing for retrieving in muddy west country fields. Money for breakfast/Drinks on the way home. An optional bottle of bubbly to celebrate after!



The trip will go to a launch site chosen by the pilot. The entire outing will take 4-5 hours, and you will later be dropped off from where you were picked up.

If you 'retrive' (stay on the ground and help) you will gain one crewing point, and if you fly you will lose one point. This way everyone gets to fly on at least 50% of their trips, as selection is done on points. In cases where everyone is on equal points Dr. Spellward's patented 'Shortest Blade of Grass' draw takes place on the launch field.



Peak-district 2003

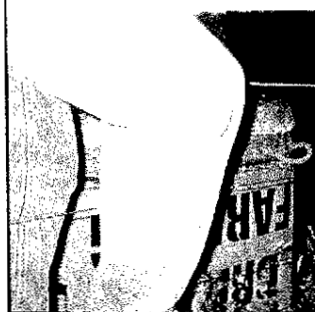
During the summer of 2003 six brave BUHABS daredevils ventured out



into the unknown and unpredictable - that being the weather of the peak-district, the team including Tim Dudman, Simon Jenkins, Ellie Fearon, Nicola Hetherington, Matthew French and Phil Semple. Throughout the trip BUHABS flew with the commercial Dragon Balloon Company who kindly supplied the propane in addition to some very good breakfasts!



With difficulty I managed- no- I mean WE managed to get up at 5 the first morning in order for a spectacular flight over one of the many valleys surrounding Bakewell. Tim managed a very soft



landing on top of a moor then summoned me to get out and pull on the crown whilst shouting 'RUN!' as he watched me fall into numerous secluded bogs! Later that evening Simon flew in a similar direction landing softly in a farmers field, the only problem was that access appeared non-existent resulting in many tired arms as we battled to carry the basket, tanks, balloon etc. over two fields and some barbed wire fences! A memory I'm sure many of us will not forget!

Despite the weather in the U.K being quite temperamental BUHABS flew 9 times which is a good achievement, of course, we couldn't fly everyday so on Tuesday morning we visited the 'Devil's Arse!' - a cave near Castleton, as requested by Ellie. Don't ask!



In all, the trip was a great success- largely due to the superb weather and will definitely be one of my highlights of my life at university. Oh- and Tim, I will get a new tent- one that is bigger and better than yours, so you and any other little kids can stop laughing and pointing at it!

Phil S.



Social!!



Tuesday 14th October @ 8pm
outside Union- come and meet us
4 some drinks!

An introduction to.....Your BUHABS Pilots:

Paul Spellward (Senior Pilot)

Joined BUHABS in 1985 before the Club even had a balloon. BUHABS got sponsorship for its first balloon in 1986 and Paul has been a committee member since then and a pilot (BUHABS' third) since 1987. Paul has made over 1300 balloon flights, at least one third of these with BUHABS. Though now working outside the University, he remains involved with BUHABS especially in pilot training and balloon maintenance. BUHABS members will most likely meet him as the "instructor" on a flight for the BUHABS trainee pilot.

Tim Dudman (BUHABS 14th Pilot)

Tim joined BUHABS in 1996, his first year at University. He became club secretary in 1997, and held this position for two years. After flying and crewing with BUHABS for a year, he applied for Pilot Training. After training in the UK and France, he passed exams in balloon systems, navigation, meteorology, human factors, RT and air law. Tim passed his flight test on 30th August 1999, flying BUHABS 5 out of Ashton Court in Bristol. He completed his solo flight in a 1977 Thunder Bolt 77 on the same day. Since then, he has clocked-up 70 hours pilot-in-command in both the UK and France. Tim now works in an engineering consultancy in Clifton and continues to fly for BUHABS.

Cheesy Tim



Ellie Fearon (Secretary & PUT)

I joined BUHABS in my first year at FRESH mainly because I wanted to do some retrieving (I'd flown when I was 13 in a commercial balloon and that was good but not quite hands on enough for my tastes!). I also had to redeem myself for having joined the morris team! (I'd like to say, however, that if you reach your deathbed without donning on some bells and dancing about with a pigs bladder you really haven't lived!). Anyway Tim and Simon J. roped myself and Hugo into editing 'The Ripline' and before I knew it I couldn't escape! At the moment I have about 20 hours training and still have some way to go, but I'm loving every minute of it. I'm also the secretary for my sins so I'll probably see you at some point this year.

Simon Jenkins (BUHABS 15th Pilot)

I joined BUHABS at Fresh in 1998 and had my first flight at the end of the first term with Robin flying from Ashton Court on a cold and frosty morning alongside Lee in 'Giraffe'. It was really excellent. I crewed and flew a few more times throughout the year and did a lot of flights during a trip to France in summer 1999. I applied for PUT at the end of the summer as Tim was checking out and had my first training flight with Paul in 'Biggles' from Horsley the same evening that Tim did his solo in 'Giraffe'. From then on I trained to fly with Lee. By the end of the following summer I had done a lot of flying including a trip to Todi in Italy with Bath and UWE. The weather turned for the winter, then we had foot and mouth from February 2001 for almost a year followed by another poor winter. I eventually checked out and soloed in September 2002 and have since flown about 13 hours PI.

President: Nicola Hetherington

Treasurer: Hannah Steer

Secretary and PUT: Ellie Fearon

Transport officer: Simon Church

Flying Treasurer and Senior Pilot: Paul Spellward

Social Secretary: Matthew French

Ripline editor: Phil Semple

Website: Phil Hooper

University Liaison Officer: Hugo Williams

Pilots: Tim Dudman

Simon Jenkins

UR COMMITTEE

